

Corps Contact

The *Badlands Bombing Range Report* is researched, written, compiled, and distributed by members of the Corps of Engineers, Omaha District BBR Project team. Articles relating to the environmental restoration of the Former BBR may be submitted for publication by members of the RAB; the Oglala Sioux Tribe; federal, state, or local agencies; and the general public. Mr. Thomas O'Hara has been designated as the official point of contact for all public inquiries concerning the Corps of Engineers' efforts at the Former BBR. All calls and letters directed to other Corps representatives will be re-routed through the Public Affairs Office. To avoid delays, please contact Mr. O'Hara directly at the address below.

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RAB NOTES

The BBR Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) serves as a forum for the exchange of information about environmental cleanup at the Former BBR. It provides for partnership among tribal members, citizens, DOD, the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, the State of South Dakota, and others. The RAB brings together people who reflect the variety of interests within the local community and enables early and continued flow of information between all parties. If you would like to apply for membership to the BBR RAB, contact Thomas O'Hara.

The next BBR RAB will be held on 4 June 1998, in the Piya Wiconi Auditorium at the Oglala Lakota College near Kyle, South Dakota. The customary pre-RAB training session will begin at 10:00 a.m. June's training will include presentations on cultural awareness and the new criteria for submittal to DOD's Explosives Safety Board. The RAB meeting will begin at 1:00 p.m.

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Inside this Issue. . .

The *BBR Report* is a quarterly publication designed to provide information on activities underway to restore the Former Badlands Bombing Range (BBR). Once restoration is complete, the Former BBR will be transferred to the Oglala Sioux Tribe of western South Dakota. In March, members of the tribe's BBR Project Office visited the Corps of Engineers in their office in Omaha, Nebraska. This visit began the first of many information-sharing opportunities between the two entities.

In this quarters' Badlands Faces/Badlands Places, three key project faces are introduced: Mr. Dell Petersen from Ellsworth Air Force Base; and Mr. Bill Supernauth and Mr. Bruce Bessken from the National Park Service. Each is committed to informing the public about the history of the Former BBR and the importance of safety there today.

This issue's feature article takes a look at the responsibilities of Mr. Perry Mesteth, an important BBR Project Office staff member who uses the latest equipment and computer programs to record the locations of ordnance on the Former BBR. Also included in this issue are updates on the Corps of Engineers' Ordnance and Explosives (OE) and Hazardous and Toxic Waste (HTW) projects; acronym definitions; and information on the next Restoration Advisory Board meeting and the point of contact for the Omaha District Corps of Engineers.

GIS Team Puts the Former BBR on the Map

Ever try to find a needle in a haystack? Or having found it once, try to find it again? For the past three years, Perry Mesteth, GIS Manager for the BBR Project Office, has been responsible for such a task - locating all the ordnance, disposal burial pits, and targets on the Former BBR and mapping them for future reference.

"It used to be tough to locate the items. People would come in and say they saw something out on the bombing range. Usually, we'd have to wait until they were available to take us out and show us. Or we'd have to search a wide area which would take a lot of time and not be very reliable."

With the GIS (geographic information system) mapping efforts and new GPS (global positioning system) equipment, recording and logging such information, including ordnance and explosives, has become routine, if not state-of-the-art. Perry sees his efforts as being a great value to the BBR Project. "I envision being able to create a database of information which the Oglala Sioux Tribe, the Corps of Engineers, and anyone else working on the Former BBR will be able to apply to whatever they're doing."

Perry and Tom Rock, GPS Technician, are helping the BBR Project Office compile information for the *Archives Search Report*. In addition, his team has helped the Corps of Engineers investigate other areas of concern within the Former BBR. If, and when, the Corps' efforts move toward ordnance removal actions, Perry's group will be very busy assisting in identifying the location of ordnance items identified in the *Archives Search Report*.

Currently, Perry can brag about getting nearly one-meter accuracy with the equipment. But that is not enough for him. "I want to get it down to centimeters. The software can do it, we just have to learn how. And we will."



Perry Mesteth at work

BBR Project Office Grows

by Emma Featherman-Sam

The Oglala Sioux Tribes' BBR Project Office has hired 30 Explosive Ordnance Disposal Trainees who began work on 27 April 1998. These trainees will be working with the BBR Project to remediate the 341,725 acres that make up the former bombing range. Each will attend training that will prepare them to begin the cleanup process at the Former BBR. All 30 trainees are Oglala Sioux Tribal members: 28 males and two females. Almost half are veterans of the Army, Air Force, and Marine Corps services.

- Partners in Progress -

BADLANDS FACES



Bruce Bessken

Bruce Bessken is the Chief of Natural Resource Management for Badlands National Park. A twenty-seven year veteran with the National Park Service, he has worked from coast to coast as a resource manager, back-country and law enforcement ranger, and park interpreter. He has experience with air and water quality, mining, endangered species, exotic species control, and wildlife and vegetation management. Bruce has co-authored major management documents and served on several regional policy-making task forces. He received a bachelor of arts degree in anthropology from Drew University in Madison, New Jersey.



Bill Supernaugh

Bill Supernaugh has been the Superintendent of Badlands National Park since February 1997. He is a career National Park Service employee with more than 30 years experience and has been stationed all over the country, from the American Southwest to Virginia.

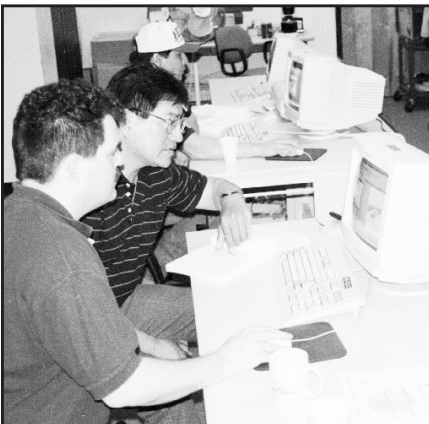
Bill received a bachelor of science degree in wildlife management from Humboldt State University in California and a master of science degree in park and resource administration from Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania.

Bill brings a wealth of knowledge and experience to the BBR Project in the areas of law enforcement and wildlife biology and management. As a recognized authority on natural resource protection, he has served on several national task forces aimed at safeguarding natural and cultural resources managed by the National Park Service.



ACRONYMS

BBR	-	Badlands Bombing Range
DOD	-	Department of Defense
GIS	-	Geographic Information System
GPS	-	Global Positioning System
HTW	-	Hazardous and Toxic Waste
OE	-	Ordnance and Explosives
RAB	-	Restoration Advisory Board



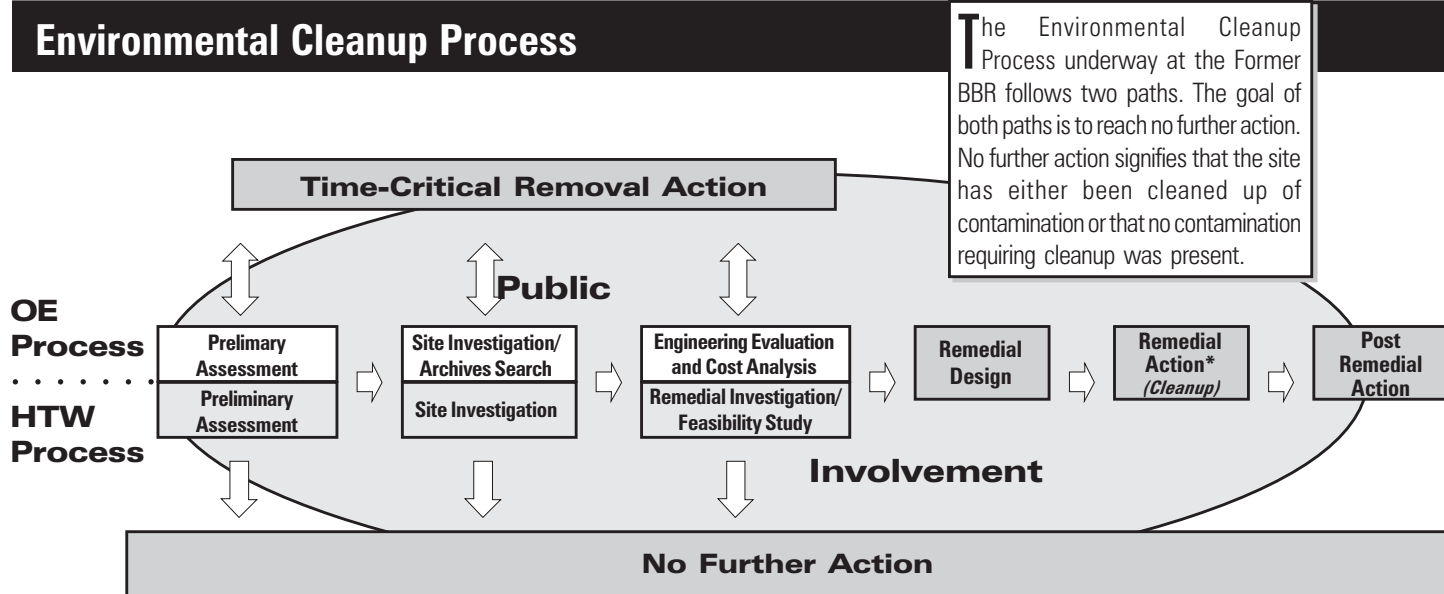
Shadowing Program a Success

Initiated by a meeting between Ms. Emma Featherman-Sam, Director of the BBR Project Office, and Colonel Robert Volz, Commander of the Omaha District of the Corps of Engineers, a Shadowing Program has been implemented with success. In late March 1998, Perry Mesteth, BBR Project Office GIS Manager, and another staff member spent two days in the Omaha District Office learning and gaining

experience on the ArcView software package, a computer mapping program.

This "train-the-trainer" opportunity was beneficial to both BBR Project Office staff members. It is hoped that such visits will be repeated and can continue as the BBR Project Office continues to hire new employees and makes progress toward cleaning up the Former BBR.

Environmental Cleanup Process



Where We Are in the Process

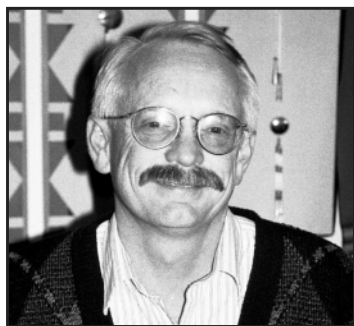
OE UPDATE

The OE remediation process is in the Site Investigation phase, which includes developing an *Archives Search Report*. The BBR Project Office is responsible for the report and has recently sent a preliminary draft to the Corps of Engineers for review. When finalized, the report will allow the Corps to develop a comprehensive range-wide plan to address ordnance. In the interim, the Corps has initiated various investigations so that scheduled development of areas on the Former BBR may begin without interference from OE issues. Such projects include the new landfill and the Oglala Sioux Rural Water Supply System waterline.

HTW UPDATE

Based on the Preliminary Assessment, the first phase of the HTW remediation process, that includes an evaluation of historical documents, five sites (four debris burial pits and one demolition pit) were determined to warrant a Site Investigation. The Site Investigation phase involves analyzing samples of soil and/or groundwater to evaluate whether a suspected source of contamination exists at the sites. The four debris burial pits were investigated and no hazardous levels of contamination were detected. The demolition pit is scheduled to be investigated this summer.

BADLANDS FACES



Dell Petersen

Dell Petersen is the Chief of Environmental Restoration at Ellsworth Air Force Base (AFB). For the past six years, Dell and his

staff have been responsible for successfully cleaning up contaminated areas at Ellsworth AFB resulting from past disposal practices and the presence of ordnance. His dedication to the BBR Project has led to gaining important attention, securing funding, and providing fast-track action to clean up the High Impact Area, a portion of the Former BBR still retained by the Air Force. Once this area is considered safe, the property may be returned to the Oglala Sioux Tribe. Dell grew up in Rapid City and has deep roots in the local community.

He received a bachelor of science degree at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and is a registered Professional Engineer. While at Ellsworth AFB, Dell also served as the Chief of Maintenance Engineering and worked as, both, a Missile and Mechanical Engineer. As one of four Co-Chairs of the BBR Restoration Advisory Board, Dell never hesitates to remind the public of the importance of safety with regards to ordnance.